SAMPLE SLAB UPDATE

#40 – FEBRUARY 2025

THE NEWSLETTER FOR SAMPLE SLAB COLLECTORS.

New Sample Slab Issuers – TCTS and CMG

It seems like entirely new sample slab issuers will never stop coming to light, and this issue has two more to add to the list.

The first is a previously unknown vintage certifier known as TCTS. I know nothing about this organization – not even the meaning of the acronym. Maryland coin dealer Nate Steinman, who recently handled two other previously unknown sample makers, auctioned the TCTS on eBay December 14, 2024 for $143.50. The homespun appearance and lack of internet footprint make this item a mystery.

This is only a guess, but "UT" could refer to the University of Texas. UT Austin instructor Lane Brunner had ICG samples made for numismatics classes in 2002 and 2003. This TCTS sample could have been made for the same or similar classes.

The second (see next page for photos) comes from a newer and more professional certifier known as CMG. The full name of this company, based in Guangzhou, China, is Zhongquian Grading. Internationally, they use the abbreviation CCG, or China Coin Grading. It's not clear where the CMG initials come from, although this could be a name used for their currency product. CCG or CMG certifies lots for auctioneers Spink and Stack's Bowers. Two CMG samples, holding Taiwan and Hong Kong notes, sold on eBay February 25, 2025, for $35.01 and $30.00.

Samples using the related CCG brand have not yet appeared.

Book News

Burton Strauss and I have substantial progress to report on the third edition of the Sample Slabs book. Burton completed a draft of Volume 1, a 700+ page work covering NGC (including NCS and

NGCX) and PCGS. This incorporates Burton's extensive work with cert verifiers to find edition sizes and other previously unknown information.

Our tasks (easier said than done) now include proofreading and assigning up to date values. A future Volume 2 will cover all other certifiers.

See SampleSlabs.info for more.

Not Exactly Samples – New Slab Boxes

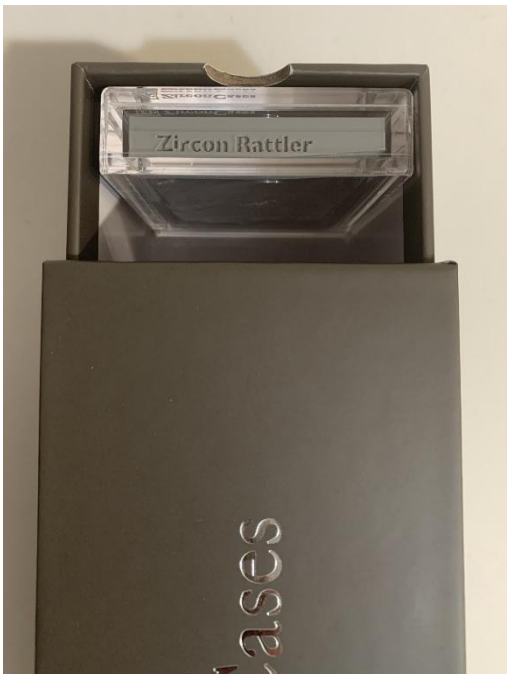
Raise your hand if you like slab boxes.

These numismatic collectibles have grown in popularity, especially among slab collectors. Boxes from obscure graders do not yet have the value of items like PCGS rattler boxes (I know of a private sale of a double-row rattler box a few weeks ago for $650) but are quite rare.

A friend gave me this Currency Grading & Certification (CGC) box that had been in his garage for years. This is the first box I remember seeing for this or other currency graders.

CGC was an early banknote grader, starting in 1999 and based in San Diego. Although not a major player, they stayed in business over 20 years and are listed in a 2021 Numismatic News dealer directory. Their websites CurrencyGradingCertification.com and CGCnotes.com no longer work, and they appear to be defunct. The currency grader CGC is not related to the prominent comic book and card certifier CGC (Certified Guaranty Company).

A brand new slab box comes from Zircon Cases, designed to hold their premium slab protectors. Thank you to Zircon's creator, Kevin Kaufmann, for bringing a large inventory to the Long Beach Expo this month, and for this box for my collection.



Buying and Selling

Buying

I buy sample collections or better single slabs for inventory. For my own collection, I look for samples from obscure or unlisted grading services (such as AHCGS, CCCS, or the TCTS and CMG mentioned above), gold coin samples, and rarities from all services. Specifically, I am looking for ICG casino chips, the PCGS blue label with a Canada 25 cents and grade MS00, as well as the PMG with an oversized Austria 1000 kroner. I also buy NGC Ocho (type 8.0) holders with W or T grades. Contact me at davidschwager@hotmail.com or Instagram @schwagerdavid

Selling

NASC sets

Most of the NASC gold coin samples from the prior issue have sold, with only a few of the Mexico 2.5 peso and 2 peso left. Here's what remains, with melt values based on $2,885/oz:

1945 Mexico 2.5 peso $259 (AGW 0.0603 oz, melt $174)
1945 Mexico 2 peso $219 (AGW 0.0482 oz, melt $139)

2020 Silver Eagle $60
1921-S Morgan AU $60

How about a package deal? Take the Silver Eagle, 21-S Morgan, and 2 peso gold for $10 off each coin, or $309 shipped.

Also see my eBay store. I will give better prices on eBay listings for readers who contact me directly. Sometimes a little better, sometimes a lot better, depending on how much room I have on the item.

Sample Slab Update #40 – February 2025 (sent 2/27/25). Published about every two months by David Schwager, Fountain Valley, California. davidschwager@hotmail.com. Please email me to be added to or removed from the mailing list. Comments and submissions are welcome. See SampleSlabBook.com or the Newman Numismatic Portal for past issues. The best way to reach me and know what I am doing is Instagram @schwagerdavid. I also respond to Facebook messages.